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Security Council

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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 4749th meeting of the Security Council, held on 2 May 2003, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Burundi", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council congratulates the Burundian parties on a peaceful transition of power in accordance with the 2000 Arusha Peace Agreement. The transition in presidency represents a major milestone in the implementation of the Agreement.

"The Security Council believes that it is now crucial to follow up this positive development with the implementation of those Arusha provisions that are still outstanding, such as meaningful security sector and judicial reforms. Resolving such pressing and other related issues is the only way to ensure that the 36-month transitional period is a success.

"The Security Council condemns the 17 April and 25 April attacks on Bujumbura and other cities by the forces of CNDD-FDD (Nkurunziza). The Security Council takes note of the CNDD-FDD's 27 April statement that it will refrain from attacking unless attacked and urges all Burundian parties to observe the terms of the ceasefire agreements and implement them without delay.

"The Security Council reiterates its demands that FNL (Rwasa) lay down its arms and immediately enter into a ceasefire with the Government of Burundi without preconditions. The FNL's unwillingness to date to seek a peaceful resolution of this conflict makes it difficult for the international community to accept the legitimacy of its concerns.

"The Security Council urges all relevant regional parties and actors to continue their efforts to bring about a lasting peace in Burundi and stands ready to consider steps against those that are found to continue to support armed attacks by the Burundi rebels.

"The Security Council also expresses support for the speedy deployment of the African Mission in Burundi to facilitate the continuing implementation of the ceasefire agreements. The Council appeals for adequate and sustained international assistance to the African Mission in Burundi, while underscoring the importance of providing the donor community with as many details as

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possible to enable it to make determinations regarding the best way to assist the mission.

"The Security Council urges donors to support the economy of Burundi, to honour the engagements taken at the Paris and Geneva Conferences, and to, within their abilities, provide as a matter of the utmost urgency budgetary and balance of payments support to the Government of Burundi, and to contribute generously to the transitional debt relief fund, with continued strong performance on economic reforms by the Government of Burundi.

"The Security Council urges the Burundian parties to take serious, meaningful steps to address human rights and accountability issues. In this regard, the Council welcomes the approval by the Burundian Senate on 23 April of legislation on genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity, and legislation establishing a truth and reconciliation commission. The Security Council looks forward to their effective implementation.

"The Security Council reaffirms the vital importance of the Burundian parties themselves taking ownership of the process to address the devastating impact of impunity, as detailed in the Arusha Accords. The international community pledges its willingness and readiness to assist in efforts to build up the Burundian capacity for promoting respect for human rights standards and the rule of law.

"The Security Council requests the Secretary-General to continue to support the peace process in Burundi including the immediate and full implementation of the ceasefire agreement signed by the Burundian parties."